

# **PARTNERSHIP FOR REINTEGRATION**

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

*AMONG*

**OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR, STATE OF IOWA**

**IOWA NATIONAL GUARD**

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

**IOWA DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS, HEALTH ADMINISTRATION**

**READJUSTMENT COUNSELING SERVICES (RCS) – VET CENTERS**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR / VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING SERVICE**

**IOWA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY VETERAN AFFAIRS**

**EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF GUARD RESERVE**

The following agreement is developed by the State Veterans Coalition to ensure that Iowa's returning veterans and their families receive timely care and comprehensive assistance in their transitions to civilian life. The signing parties agree to work together, honoring the dedicated service and sacrifice of our soldiers and families. We promise to devote our time and resources into welcoming back our troops and making sure that each service person receives all the benefits and assistance needed to support their return.

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to define the mutually agreed upon requirements, expectations, and obligations of the signing parties. This agreement will augment the ongoing, comprehensive effort necessary to ensure military service members and their families are honored for their valuable service to our country. The goal of this Memorandum of Understanding is to provide the same level of assistance to members of the Reserve Components and the National Guard as currently provided to transitioning members of the Active Components. It is recognized that the Department of Defense and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs are providing world-class transition service upon return from Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle, and other mobilizations in support of the Global War on Terror. This agreement will focus primarily on "after active-duty" for members of the Reserve Components and the National Guard, and deal with the multitude of

medical and mental issues military members often face several months or years following service.

## **ADJUTANT GENERAL'S INTENT**

Each Commander will conduct a Reintegration Readiness Program after returning from Deployment. Reintegration Program provides service members and their families personalized service in understanding and filing for Veteran's benefits and entitlements. Commanders will request and coordinate through their chain-of-command to the Iowa Army National Guard Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, Joint Forces Headquarters-Iowa (JFHQ) for scheduling. The Transition Assistance Advisor will request support and schedule the involvement of members of the US Department of Veterans Affairs, Health Administration; US Department of Veterans Affairs, Benefits Administration; Vet Center, US Department of Labor/Veterans Employment and Training Service, Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs, Iowa Work Force Development, Employer Support of Guard Reserve, and Iowa Association of County Commissioners of Veterans Affairs. The Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel Mobilization Officer will work with both the Transition Assistance Advisor and the office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations to ensure these re-integration activities are incorporated in the post deployment training plan and that the requirements within the Redeployment Units Reconstitution Guidance Policy are met.

## **REINTEGRATION PROGRAM**

As Reserve and Iowa National Guard units return from deployments, we recognize that these personnel – our fellow Iowan citizens – are now veterans in the truest sense of the word. They, and their families, will benefit from the collective assistance this MOU establishes.

The signatories and coalition partners of this agreement are joining together to do three things:

- 1) Help honor these military service members and their families for their valuable and admirable service to our Country
- 2) Help them deal with the multitude of personal and family issues associated with their wartime service and assist them with their post-deployment adjustment.
- 3) Help returning service members transition to civilian life by assisting them with employment, education, and claims for veterans' entitlements.

Throughout Iowa, each of the agencies identified in this MOU will play an integral role as partners in this effort. Teams, as described below, will be dispatched to Unit Armories or facilities as requested. These teams will provide information on Veterans Benefits, give assistance with VA claims, and lend support in other matters to better veteran re-integration.

Team members will *typically* consist of the following:

- 1) 2 representatives from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; One from Veteran's Benefits Administration and the other from Veteran's Health Administration
- 2) 1 or 2 Workforce Development Specialists
- 3) 2 accredited Veterans Service Officers
- 4) 1 representative from the Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs
- 5) 1 County Veterans Affairs Representative
- 6) 1 mental health professional

- 7) 1 representative from Department of Labor – Veterans Employment & Training Service.
- 8) 1 Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve representative.
- 9) 1 Team Leader
- 10) 1 TRICARE Representative
- 11) 1 National Guard Education Officer
- 12) 1 Family Program Representative
- 13) 1 Transition Assistance Advisor

While this represents a “typical” team, components such as local employers and colleges and trade schools will be added as appropriate.

## **IOWA NATIONAL GUARD STATE FAMILY PROGRAM: READINESS, EDUCATION, ASSISTANCE, SUPPORT**

The Iowa National Guard Family Program provides ongoing support to service members and their families. This program provides the infrastructure to identify, define, address and resolve issues that impact a military member and his/her family while in federal or state duty, training, wartime or peacetime. The Iowa National Guard Family Program will provide the following:

- **Family Assistance Center Specialists**

Provide information, referral, outreach, and support services to military members and their families for all services and components. Provide assistance to military families on pay and financial issues, military medical benefits, legal issues, ID cards and DEERS enrollment, Employer Support to the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), accessing military dependent benefits and services from local installations, and a wide variety of other family-related deployment issues.

- **Enduring Families Reintegration Workshops**

The intent of the workshop is to ease the transition from an active duty lifestyle back to civilian life, to assist families readjusting to each other and their new roles. Professional Volunteers facilitate debriefing sessions for peer to peer and are confidential. These volunteers may have training or background in any of these areas: Mental Health/Medical/Social Work Backgrounds, Veterans, Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM), Chaplains, Emergency Management, Paramedics, etc. This workshop is mandatory for soldiers; families (spouses, significant others, parents) are highly encouraged to attend.

- **Youth and Teen Program**

The mission of the Iowa National Guard Youth and Teen Program is to support the social, emotional and academic needs of National Guard youth and teens. This support is available in the form of mental health/academic resource and referrals, educator trainings, annual symposiums, weekend retreats, school presentations and through various other avenues.

- **Strong Bonds Programs**

- **Marriage Enrichment Seminars**

- **PREP (The Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program)**

- Young married couples face roughly a 40% chance of divorce. Military families are at increased risk due to deployments. This workshop teaches couples the skills they need to nurture a lasting relationship. Couples spend most of their time in special discussions or practicing skills. Key topics include expectations, commitment, forgiveness, feeling understood, and sensuality. PREP is not therapy.

- **Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage**

- This program explores the underlying dynamics of male/female relationships, combining striking clarity and practical solutions to common relationship woes.

- **PICK (Premarital Interpersonal Choices and Knowledge) Workshop**

- The program has a five-lesson curriculum as a roadmap for single military members to follow in building a relationship and choosing a life partner.

- **7 Habits of Highly Effective Military Families**

- This program provides insight into creating and sustaining a strong family culture in a turbulent world.

## **VETERANS BENEFITS AND ENTITLEMENTS**

- **Data Sharing**

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs and the Iowa National Guard will enter into a limited data sharing agreement to ensure all Iowa National Guard Veterans receive a letter from the Governor, The Adjutant General, and the Director of Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs. The letter will express gratitude for their service and encourage them to seek their various veteran benefits and entitlements. The agreement will be made possible via the Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) that IDVA receives on all service members upon separation from active duty and return to Iowa. IDVA will construct and maintain the database while the Iowa National Guard will assist in verifying the accuracy of the data. Follow up letters will be sent to each returnee to ensure every opportunity is provided to access VA health care, claims assistance, employment services, and mental health services.

- **Data Sharing – VA Regional Office and Iowa National Guard**

The Iowa National Guard and VA Regional Office agree to work together to ensure timely claim processing for Iowa National Guards members. Medical records, treatment information, and

other service information as necessary will be directed to VA in a timely manner in order to expedite the claims process.

#### ▪ **Claims Assistance**

The VA Regional Office will designate a coordinator for Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle, and Global War on Terror. The coordinator will be responsible for providing information and assistance regarding all VA benefits and entitlements. This Coordinator will provide benefit information and take claims from all service members. The VA Regional Office is committed to processing claims for disability compensation benefits as quickly as possible and gives them our highest priority.

#### ▪ **Communication Plan**

Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs and the Veterans Benefits Administration will work with the Iowa National Guard and Reserve Units to ensure the Iowa National Guard and Reserve Family Readiness Networks are fully aware of the assistance and services outlined in this MOU. Signing parties, also agree to meet semi-annually to review the effectiveness of the MOU, identify gaps of service, and make recommendations to appropriate organizations for service improvements.

### **IOWA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

The Statewide Veteran Services Coordinator will provide statewide coordination of employment outreach services to units of the Reserve Components and National Guard.

The coordinator can be reached at (515) 281-9327 between the hours of 8:00am and 4:30pm, Monday through Friday. The coordinator is the Point of Contact for employment outreach participation and services. The coordinator will confirm arrangements for dates and times of outreach services provided by the armories and/or at the local Workforce Center.

Workforce staff and partners will provide employment services to all veterans and spouses in all Workforce Centers in Iowa. Local Veterans Employment Representatives (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Representatives (DVOR) specialists are available to provide eligible veterans more intensive needs.

As appropriate, LVER and DVOP staff will provide and facilitate a full range of employment and training services to meet the needs of all veterans, especially newly separated and transitioning military personnel.

1. Veteran services may include a combination of self-service, facilitated self-service, group services, one-on-one services, and/or referral to supportive services. Special needs veterans and recently separated veterans with military occupational specialties that are not readily transferable to the civilian workforce will be case managed by DVOPs. This includes veterans with major barriers to employment and who are in need of more intensive services.
2. Examples of employment and training services may include, but are not limited to the following activities:
  - a) Conduct Job seeking skills and/or job clubs
  - b) Provide job development and referrals

- c) Refer veterans to appropriate IWD personnel for assistance in filing for unemployment insurance
- d) Provide vocational guidance
- e) Provide labor market information
- f) Provide referrals to training and supportive services
- g) Coordinate referrals to VA Rehabilitation and Employment Programs

3. DVOP staff will develop outreach programs in cooperation with the VA Regional Office Operation Enduring Freedom/Operation Iraqi Freedom Coordinator, VA Vocational Rehabilitation & Employment, educational institutions, and with employers to ensure maximum assistance is provided to disabled veterans who have completed or are participating in a vocational rehabilitation program.

## **US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR - VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

The Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) staff is responsible for the delivery of employment and outreach services to veterans and transitioning service persons.

The Uniformed Service Employment Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA) is a federal statute that provides job protections and employment rights to military service member employees who serve on military duty. VETS are to provide technical assistance to veterans, National Guard members, and reservists who experience problems returning to their civilian jobs. VETS staff also assists employers by providing information about the USERRA statute, explaining employer and employee responsibilities, as well as military leave policies.

When there is an alleged violation of the USERRA statute, a complaint may be filed with VETS. An investigation is conducted and mediation is attempted to formally resolve the issues.

## **EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT OF THE GUARD RESERVE**

The National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was created to inform employers of the ever-increasing importance of the National Guard and Reserve and to explain the necessity for – and role of – these forces in national defense. ESGR seeks to gain and reinforce the support of America's employers for a strong National Guard and Reserve system.

Programs that are conducted by ESGR include the employer outreach, military outreach, ombudsman services, and employer recognition. Employer outreach focuses on educating employers on USERRA and ESGR programs available to them. ESGR has volunteers throughout the State who focus on reaching out to employers within local communities. The Military Liaison is an ESGR volunteer who works with the units at the National Guard or Reserve training centers or armories. This person is a direct link between ESGR and the military member to provide information and assistance should employment problems develop. The ombudsman services are a group of trained volunteers within the state to assist community employers and employees in understanding and applying the law. Most local ESGR committee ombudsmen are

business leaders. They understand both sides of the problem and can help mediate. All employer recognition and awards originate from nominations by individual Reserve component members recognizing their employers for supportive employment policies and practices.

The Iowa ESGR website ([www.iowaesgr.org](http://www.iowaesgr.org)) contains information of interest to employers, Reserve component members, and ESGR committee members about ESGR programs, services, and USERRA. It lists points of contact for each ESGR area committee. Reserve component members are able to nominate their employers for recognition through the on-line "Patriotic Employer" nomination form. The website also lists ESGR fact sheets, the federal statute (USERRA), the Iowa Code for Temporary Military Duty, and other important information.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Resources for mental health care are available to veterans returning from deployment in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Noble Eagle, and other mobilizations in support of the Global War on Terrorism. Resources include VA Medical Centers, Outpatient Clinics, Vet Centers and approved TRICARE Providers. Each service entity below offers overlapping, yet unique services for the deployment needs of Iowa National Guard, Reserve veterans, and family members.

Veterans in Iowa are served by several VA Medical Centers; Des Moines, Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa; Omaha, Nebraska; Sioux Falls, South Dakota; and outpatient clinics. Services include primary, secondary and tertiary inpatient and outpatient care, long term care, community based outpatient clinics, and home care. VA also operates several Readjustment Counseling Service Vet Centers. Health providers in the TRICARE Network, also offer a unique array of readjustment counseling and mental health services. Veterans suffering from post-deployment stress problems, such as PTSD, TBI, depression, or substance use, are likely qualified for services in some or all of these settings. Network participants are skilled at considering the needs of each individual seeking assistance, and making referrals as needed. Therefore, entry at any point in this service network should lead to the best treatment option possible for a given veteran. Services for family members may be more limited to specific programs.

## **Medical Health Services**

Following Title 10 deployment the soldier has 180 days TRICARE Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP), unless they live within 50 miles of any Medical Treatment Facility (MTF) including Offutt Air Force Base. Members may choose one of the TRICARE Program options, TRICARE Standard, TRICARE Extra, or TRICARE Prime only if near a MTF or live in a TRICARE Prime Service Area. This insurance enables the soldier and family members to obtain medical treatment to include a physical examination and be referred or request prior authorization for Specialty Medical Care following release from Active Duty after Mobilization. Soldiers obtaining must obtain pre-approval from TRICARE prior to receiving specialty care, or the soldier will be responsible for the cost of the Medical Appointment. Iowa National Guard soldiers will be assessed on multiple occasions to screen for medical problems related to deployment, including but not limited to hearing problems, back and joint issues, TBI,

PTSD, and other mental health issues related to deployment. If the problem is related to deployment or made worse by deployment a Line of Duty (LOD) will be completed, and the soldier assisted with making appointments to get additional medical care. Specialty care must be referred at the PDHRA event for AMEDD to assist in pay and travel to attend medical appointments.

## **Dental Care**

The soldier following release from Title 10 Active Duty after Mobilization has 180 days to be seen by the Veterans Affairs Medical Hospital and have their dental issues examined and treated at no cost. Soldier must call within the 180 days to make the appointment. TRICARE does not cover dental examinations and treatment, unless the soldier has enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP).

## **POST-DEPLOYMENT AND HEALTH REASSESSMENT**

The Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) is a force protection process designed to enhance the deployment-related continuum of care. PDHRA is targeted at three to six months, post return from a contingency operation to a combat zone. PDHRA program provides education, screening, and global health assessment to identify and facilitate access to care for deployment-related physical health, mental health, and readjustment concerns. Treatment and fellowship are arranged on VA partnership. PDHRA is a mandatory program for all Iowa National Guard soldiers. If a Soldier is referred following this event he/she may be eligible for 10 days pay and travel to attend medical/behavioral health appointments. On site events need to be scheduled by Unit Commanders through chain of command to the Deputy State Surgeon.

### **▪ VA Medical Centers**

1. Outpatient mental health services, including specialized services for women veterans.
2. Specialized inpatient hospitalization for stress disorders related to traumatic combat stress exposure.
3. Acute inpatient hospitalization for general mental health conditions related to overseas deployment.
4. Screen for TBI
5. Residential treatment and psychosocial rehabilitation services.
6. Specialized post-deployment clinic services providing mental health screening and treatment integrated within a primary care medical setting.
7. The VA Medical Centers within Iowa, which rely upon one another to serve the health care needs of returning veterans.

### **▪ VA Readjustment Counseling Service – Vet Centers**

1. Readjustment counseling to any eligible Guard or Reserve member who served on active duty under the provisions of Title 10, USC for service in the Global War on Terrorism.
2. Counseling related to combat and sexual trauma, including assessment, individual, family, and group therapy.
3. Treatment may include the veteran and his/her family members when necessary for the readjustment of the veteran.



4. Bereavement services are available to certain family members such as mothers, fathers, siblings, and grandparents.
5. Referral to VA Medical Center and VA Regional Office for specialized treatment and benefits assistance.
6. Pre- and Post-deployment briefings offered secondary to deployment
7. Emergent need and referral services.
8. When events are scheduled in a Vet Center catchment area, a Vet Center Team Leader or Vet Center Clinical Team Member will coordinate and be in attendance

#### **VA Regional Office**

1. A full range of community-based Vocational Rehabilitation and Independent living services for veterans with service related conditions.
2. Vocational counseling for transitioning servicepersons.
3. Assistance to veterans in accessing other VA benefits including, education, home loan, insurance, and survivor benefits
4. Development and processing of claims for service related disabilities including specialized services and assistance for men and women veteran survivors of PTSD, TBI, and military sexual trauma.

#### **TRICARE HEALTH CARE ALLIANCE**

National Guard and Reserve members separating from Active Duty under Title 10 USC, are generally entitled to participate in the Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP) for six months (180 days) after separation. Medical and behavioral health care for Guard/Reserve members and their families are available under this program.

TRICARE Reserve Select, a premium based health care plan available to eligible members who remain in the National Guard and Reserves, provides medical and behavioral health care in hospitals and clinics throughout the state.

Information on enrollment and accessing benefits will be provided at pre and post deployment briefings, during Home Station Reverse Soldier Readiness Processing, and Return to Readiness when possible. The goal will be to provide this information and access as early and often as possible to assist Reserve and Guard members with all areas of their transition home.

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#### **MOU Contacts**

##### **Iowa Department of Veterans Affairs**

Camp Dodge, Bldg. A6A  
7105 – NW 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Johnston, IA 50131-1824  
phone: (515) 242-5331

toll free: (800) 838-4692

[www.iowava.org](http://www.iowava.org)

**Iowa Workforce Development**

1000 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, Iowa 50319-0209  
phone: (515) 281-9327  
toll: (800) 562-4692  
e-mail: [Robert.Loter@iwd.iowa.gov](mailto:Robert.Loter@iwd.iowa.gov)

**U.S Department of Veterans Affairs Regional Office**

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*VBA OEF/OIF Coordinator*  
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**U. S. Department of Veterans Medical Centers****Des Moines**

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**Iowa City**

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**Omaha, NE**

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## **Vet Centers Serving Iowa**

### **Cedar Rapids**

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Cedar Rapids, IA 52402  
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### **Des Moines**

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### **Omaha, Nebraska**

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### **Quad Cities Vet Center**

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### **Sioux City**

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### **Employment Support of the National Guard**

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### **Iowa National Guard State Family Programs Office**

MAJ Kevin Kruse

*State Family Program Director*

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*Family Assistance Center Specialist*

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*Family Assistance Center Specialist*

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Coralville, IA 52241-2731  
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*Wing Family Program Coordinator*

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*Wing Family Program Coordinator*

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**Iowa National Guard Benefits Office**

Transition Assistance Advisor

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FAX 515-252-4139  
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## Iowa Military Installations with Military Identification Cards Issuance

### **Boone**

2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade Combat Team, 34<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division  
700 Snedden Drive  
POC: MSG Mike Van Pelt and SSG Nancy Huaswirth  
Phone (515) 727-3883/3811

### **Cedar Rapids**

649<sup>th</sup> Area Support Group  
1599 Wenig Road  
Cedar Rapids IA 52402-3799  
POC: SFC Sullivan  
Phone: (319) -6620

### **Des Moines**

*Air National Guard*  
132<sup>nd</sup> MSF/DPMA Des Moines  
310 McKinley Avenue  
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Des Moines, IA 50321-2799  
POC MSgt Kevin McNeal  
Phone: (515) 256-8530/8533/8535

*Naval/Marine Corps Reserves*  
47 Dickman Road  
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Des Moines, IA 50315-6213  
POC: HM1 rhole  
Phone (515) 285-5581

### **Coralville**

Headquarters, 67<sup>th</sup> Troop Command  
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### **Johnston**

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### **Sioux City**

185<sup>th</sup> Air Refueling Wing  
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